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SUPPLEMENT

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League Assemblies

1. Several meetings were held during the present session of the Arab League, which assembled in Cairo beginning 30 October 1946. In an opening address on this date Fawzi al-Malki, Minister of Trans-Jordan to Egypt, announced that the Iraqi delegation would preside over this session of the League. Al-Malki briefly reviewed the problems faced by the League, emphasizing the necessity of solving the Palestinian tangle.
2. Taking the Chair, Tahsin al-Askari, Iraqi Minister to Egypt, counselled patience and cooperation. He summarized the difficulties of the Palestinian problem, describing the inconclusive results achieved at the London Congress, and attacked the Zionists. He expressed satisfaction that the evacuation of Syria had been completed, hoping that soon Egypt would also be free of foreign troops.
3. Thereupon the assembly considered in turn the items on the agenda, entered for consideration and final decision. These are:
 - (a) Demand by Syria to resubmit its two proposals concerning the reorganization of the reciprocal diplomatic representation of Arab countries, by elevating these representations to embassies; proposal to which the Egyptian and Syrian governments have already subscribed;
 - (b) Consideration of project for a treaty of civil aviation between the member states of the Arab League;
 - (c) Proposal for a uniform agreement to be applied when an Arab state enters into a contract with a non-Arab country;
 - (d) Project for Arab states' postal union;
 - (e) Project for union of Arab states' telegraph and radio communication;
 - (f) Consideration of report by the Passport and Nationality Committee, recommending a uniform agreement for travel between the Arab countries.

CLASSIFICATION

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- (g) Proposal for adopting a uniform visa procedure for the Arab countries;
 - (h) Proposal made by Palestine Committee recommending the establishment of a company for buying and preserving Arab Palestinian lands;
 - (i) Examination of results of London Palestinian Congress;
 - (j) Consideration of request submitted by Lebanese Government concerning the reciprocal residence of citizens of Arab League member states;
 - (k) Suggestion submitted by Lebanese Government to consider the adoption of uniform procedure for commercial exchange and customs between Arab League member states;
 - (l) Consideration of memorandum submitted by the Office of the General Secretary of the Arab League, recommending the intervention of member states on behalf of the independence of Indonesia, proclaiming it a republic;
 - (m) Proposal to devise a method for the organization of a uniform foreign policy for Arab League member states.
4. At this meeting the reciprocal cultural treaty, which had been submitted earlier for consideration, was approved and has become effective. Because of the approaching Bairam holidays, the meetings were postponed until 18 November 1946.

18 November Meeting

5. On 18 November the Arab League assembled under the Chairmanship of Dr. al-Fadhil al-Jamali, President of the Iraqi delegation and Minister of Foreign Affairs of that country. Representing the member states of the League were:
- (a) Sa'dallah al-Jabri, for Syria,
 - (b) Sa'ad al-Mullah, for Lebanon,
 - (c) Dr. al-Fadhil al-Jamali, for Iraq,
 - (d) Dr. Fawzi al-Malki, for Trans-Jordan,
 - (e) Sayad Abdallah al-Imari, for the Yemen,
 - (f) Ibrahim Abd-al-Hadi, Husayn Haykal, and Makram Ubayd, for Egypt.
6. In his address, al-Jamali emphasized the importance of this session of the League, because of the urgent necessity of taking action for solving the Palestine problem. Subjects were then brought up in turn for discussion, and action was taken as follows:

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- (a) Syria reiterated its request for the approval of its proposal on diplomatic representation (para 3-a);
 - (b) An explanation defining the "nationality" of citizens of Arab states was attached to a report submitted by the Passport and Nationality Committee, on passport and visa procedure (para 3-f,g);
 - (c) Preliminary discussions were held on the recommendation of the Palestine Committee for the establishment of a company for the purpose of purchasing and preserving the Arab Palestinian lands (para 3-h).
 - (d) Submission of a report on the Palestinian London Congress.
7. Branch committees were designated to study each of these problems and submit their recommendations. 'Azzam Pasha's memorandum, regarding the independence of Indonesia, was unanimously approved (para 3-1). The meeting was then adjourned to 20 November 1946.

Palestinian Land Purchase Committee Meeting

8. The preparatory committee created by the League for the purpose of establishing a company for the purchase of Palestinian lands also met on 18 November. The following attended the discussions:
- (a) Ibrahim Abd-al-Hadi
 - (b) Abd-al-Rahman 'Azzam
 - (c) Hafiz Afifi
 - (d) Tahsin al-As'ari
 - (e) Sheikh Sami al-Khuri
 - (f) Jamal al-Din al-Husayni
 - (g) Abdallah al-Amiri
 - (h) Yusuf Bamba
 - (i) Fahmi Sulayman Bey
 - (j) Dr. Asa'd Salhab
 - (k) Maitre Maurice Arkash
9. After considering the execution of the project, it was agreed to form branch committees in the various Arab states for the purpose of collecting contributions. An executive committee was also designated for the administration of the company, which will be established on a legal basis. Thereupon, a few of those present made private donations to the fund.

20 November Meeting

10. The third meeting of the Arab League took place on 20 November. The discussions centered on the questions of the diplomatic representation to which objections were raised, Ahmad Hilmi Pasha's activities, and the subject of the purchase of Palestine lands.

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Note: Ahmad Hilmi Pasha, President of the Palestine National Bank (Bank al-Ummah), recently came to Egypt and opened a branch of the bank at Midan Mustafa Kamal, Cairo, for the purpose of dealing with the transactions of the Palestine Land Purchase company. He is actively organizing the capitalization of the company which was tentatively set at L.E. 1,000,000 by the Palestine Land Purchase Committee.

11. The governments of Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, and Syria promised to subscribe to the allotment of the capital specified by the Committee. Independent of its share of the allotment, Egypt announced the payment of L.E. 100,000 to Ahmad Hilmi's bank, as an advance contribution for this purpose. The meeting then adjourned to 23 November.

23 November Meeting

12. At the fourth meeting of the Arab League on 23 November 1946 subjects were considered and resolutions were passed as follows:
 - (a) A recommendation submitted by the Cultural Committee for the establishment of a higher educational institution for the teaching of the Islamic Law and Religion was approved. It was proposed to place it under the joint patronage of the Arab League, al-Azhar and Fuad I Universities;
 - (b) Abd-al-Rahman 'Azzam was instructed to lodge an official complaint in the name of the League to the authorities concerned, protesting against the maltreatment of the Tripolitarians and demanding the release of Prince Abd-al-Karim, an internec;
 - (c) 'Azzam was also detailed to request from the French Government the liberation of Muhammad al-Munsif Pasha, Bey of Tunis, now held in France.
13. The capitalization of L.E. 1,000,000 for the projected Palestine Land Purchase Company was approved, together with provisions for the payment of an interest rate of 5 per cent to shareholders. Representatives of Arab countries subscribed a total of L.E. 250,000 on behalf of their governments to expedite the execution of the plan.

Tense Debates on "Greater Syria" Project: King Faruq Intervenes

14. A meeting of the Arab League took place on 26 November 1946 which did not last long because of a stormy debate between the Ministers of Syria and Trans-Jordan on the Greater Syria project. Considered by the League for the first time upon the request of Syria, this project aims at uniting Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Trans-Jordan, and part of Palestine under one Crown. Under British auspices it is sponsored by King Abdallah of Trans-Jordan, who hopes to become King of "Greater Syria" with British assistance. Soon it appeared that elements of Arab States are strongly opposed to the plan.

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15. Advised of the unfavorable turn in League affairs, King Faruq summoned the representatives of Iraq and Trans-Jordan, the two countries favoring the plan. The King exhorted them to ignore the project at this time, to avoid creating a discord in the League. Listening to the advice of the King were:
 - (a) Tahsin al-Askari, Iraqi Minister to Egypt,
 - (b) Dr. Fadhil al-Jamali, Iraqi Foreign Affairs Minister,
 - (c) Muhammad al-Shariqi Pasha, Foreign Affairs Minister of Trans-Jordan.
16. The League assembled again on 27 November 1946 and the "Greater Syria" project was raised anew. It was unanimously agreed to reject the proposal, and an official statement clarifying the situation was prepared, to terminate once and for all the deliberations on the subject. Although the rejection of the project was approved unanimously, not all of the Arab States' representatives were in agreement about the refusal, and considerable doubt appeared to remain on the merit of the plan. This statement, which was printed on 28 November and copies of which were submitted to the Foreign Affairs Ministers of all Arab League member states, read as follows:

"Discussions have recently taken place about the 'Greater Syria' project, and this has caused the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Arab countries to hold a special meeting (27 November 1946). They studied the matter fully and it was agreed that no one party by discussing the subject intended to interfere with the independence and the sovereignty of any of the member states of the Arab League. Therefore, they confirm that each country continues to uphold and respect the Arab League covenant and will continue to carry out faithfully its provisions to the letter."

Signatures:

Muhammad al-Shariqi, Trans-Jordan,
Jamil Mardam, Syria,
Fadhil al-Jamali, Iraq,
Yusuf Yasin, Saudi Arabia,
Ibrahim Abd-al-Hadi, Egypt,
Filip Taqla, Lebanon,
Al-Kasi Muhammad al-Imari, the Yemen.
17. That the seeds of discord and suspicion within the League had not been dispelled by these measures was demonstrated when, on 29 November 1946, Sa'd al-Mullah and Fu'ad Amun, leading Cabinet members of Lebanon who had come to Egypt to represent their country in the League, suddenly departed, although the League was in full session. In a statement they said they were recalled by Sheikh Bisharah al-Khuri, President of the Lebanese Republic, for "consultations" following the developments on the "Greater Syria" question. Muhammad al-Shariqi Pasha, Foreign Affairs Minister of Trans-Jordan, also left Egypt, departing on 2 December 1946.

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28 November Meeting: Statement on Palestine: Protest to Mr. Truman

18. On 28 November the Arab League met, and the Palestine controversy was brought to the fore. After a review of the underlying factors affecting the situation in Palestine, a common resolution was agreed upon. It is:

"The Arab League considers that the increase in the immigration of Jews to Palestine is an outstanding menace to the Arabs. Nor can the Arab League rely upon any settlement of the controversy at the London Conference on Palestine. It has, therefore, instructed the Office of the General Secretary of the League to protest to the British Government for tolerating an impossible situation, reminding His Majesty's Government that the continued large-scale immigration of Jews to Palestine constitutes a contravention of the promise it gave in 1939, which will certainly lead to the disturbance of peace in the Middle East. The Arab world condemns all Jewish immigration to Palestine and repudiates the British plan for limiting it to 'legal proportions.' The League, therefore, considers all such Jews who entered Palestine as illegal immigrants who should be at once deported to their places of origin."

19. An Arab League directive instructed all member states to advise their delegations to the UN of their unanimous opinion on the Palestine question, requesting them to contact President Truman and the members of his government and impart to them the distress in the Arab world over the persistent interference of the United States in Palestinian affairs. The Office of the General Secretary of the Arab League was similarly directed to forward a memorandum embodying this meaning to the United States Government.

Arab Cross-Currents

20. Although not invited to attend the Arab League session, Jamal-al-Din al-Husayni, the leading official of the High Arab Committee in Palestine, came to Cairo for possible consultations. Another official of the Committee, Dr. Husayn Fahri al-Khalidi, followed al-Husayni to Egypt after unleashing an attack upon the League, describing it as "a useless instrument." These two men are currently holding meetings with Emile al-Ghuri, another member of the Arab Committee, and Ahmad Hilmi Pasha. Al-Husayni, al-Khalidi, and al-Ghuri are among the recent visitors to Muhammad Amin al-Husayni, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, at his home in Zaytun.
21. Aware of the adverse implications of al-Khalidi's unfavorable comment of the League, al-Husayni, with the assent of the Grand Mufti, issued a statement to alleviate the misgivings of the League which is accusing the Arab High Committee of sowing discord in Arab ranks, expressing his faith in the League and stating that "good things could yet come out of it, although it acts slowly."

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Cairo Notes:

- (a) Privately, Jamal-al-Din al-Husayni says that the British are in agreement with the Jewish terrorists about all the events occurring in Palestine, and that the Zionist assault upon the British constitutes a means to intimidate the Arabs and compel them to accept the Jewish demands for the partition of Palestine.
 - (b) Al-Husayni, who, in addition to his duties as the head of the Arab High Committee, is the President of the Palestine Arab Party, has stated that through this unit he has succeeded to a large extent to organize the Futuwah Army, which is the Arab youth organization formed in Palestine for the protection of Arab lives and property from the attacks of the Jewish terrorists.
 - (c) According to al-Husayni, the Jews have broadened their plan for the purchase of Arab Palestinian lands. He said he had received countless appeals to urge the Arab League to hurry to save the Arab lands.
 - (d) He further stated that the Jews, not content with acquiring the Arab Palestinian lands, are now planning to make large-scale purchases of Egyptian lands, adding that the Delta Land Company of Cairo had been approached to this effect for big orders at Maadi (Cairo suburb). In addition, the Zionist Jews intend to take over huge portions of desert land adjoining Palestine.
22. Al-Husayni's High Arab Committee is projecting an Arab National Congress to be held in Egypt or in Syria to discuss the Palestinian question, believing that the present governments of the Arab States are afraid to take any action in favor of Palestine, fearing British and American reprisals.
23. Late in November a meeting took place at the Arab Club (al-Nadi al-Arabi) on Malika-Farida Square, which is a gathering place for the Palestinian youth residing in Egypt. It is directed by Jamal Arafat, an employee at the Hamzawi administrative offices of a weaving plant. The Honorary Chairmanship is jointly held by 'Ali Mahir and Makram Ubayd. At this meeting the Arab National Congress projected by al-Husayni (para 22) was approved. It was further suggested to broaden this idea to encompass the creation of a National Arab League (al-Gama'a al-Arabiyyah al-Sha'biyyah) which will function independently of the existing Arab League and will challenge its authority, because "it is an instrument dominated by foreign interests which will never accomplish any good for the Arabs, whereas the one planned will fight to the end for the liberation of the Arabs, until the cause of the Arabs has obtained satisfaction."
24. Abd-al-Rahman 'Azzam is reported desperately attempting to maintain harmony within the League and to make the League assert its ascendancy, in the face of growing difficulties.

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